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SUMMARY RECORD OF NINTH MEETING OF
QUADRIPARTITE WORKING GROUP ON GERMANY AND BERLIN
MARCH 9, 1960

Participants:France

Mr. Winckler

GermanyMr. Pauls
Mr. OsterheldUnited KingdomViscount Hood
Mr. LoganUnited StatesMr. Hillenbrand
Mr. Vigderman
Mr. Kearney
Mr. McKiernan
Mr. Dean

Defense - Col. Schofield

Mr. Hillenbrand transmitted two papers on Berlin contingency planning (II WNG/5.4 and II WNG/5.5) to the German representative. He said he believed it would be useful for the Working Group in preparing the Western position for the summit to have in mind the situation which might arise if negotiations broke down completely and the Soviets then withdrew from the functions they had hitherto exercised with respect to allied access to Berlin. The first paper was a Tripartite agreement of April 4, 1959 which was the point of departure for more subsequent, detailed planning. This planning is by its nature advance planning and largely hypothetical. Decisions as to the courses of action described could be taken only by the governments if events anticipated in the paper should actually take place. The second paper was a hypothetical study of a chain of developments which could arise if the Soviets withdrew from their functions with respect to Western military access to Berlin. It should be emphasized that the paper dealt with the situation which might theoretically take place rather than being a prediction of actually expected events. Mr. Hillenbrand pointed out that the contingency papers were of the most sensitive nature and that precautions should be taken to ensure that their security would be maintained. Lord Hood pointed out that some of the planning foreseen in the April 4, 1959 paper had since proceeded. Mr. Pauls thanked Mr. Hillenbrand for transmitting the two papers, stating the appreciation of his Government and noting that they filled the gap in German understanding of the Berlin question.

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Mr. Hillenbrand tabled a U.S. paper on the status of Berlin in relation to NATO (II WAG/1.15) containing the U.S. point of view expressed in last week's meeting and a second paper (II WAG/4.6) bringing up-to-date an earlier U.S. proposal for a plebiscite related to the German peace treaty issue and taking into account comments made by other group participants. Mr. Pauls noted the support of his Government for a plebiscite proposal. Mr. Hillenbrand then tabled the U.S. paper on the basis of a modus vivendi in Berlin (II WAG/1.14), noting that it was an attempt to synthesize an earlier French paper on principles of the Western position on Berlin (II WAG/5.3) and the U.S. paper on minimum requirements in Berlin (II WAG/1.9). The paper did not embody an official U.S. position but was merely a working paper designed to facilitate further discussion and as a possible contribution to a Working Group report on the pros and cons of possible changes in the status of Berlin.

Mr. Winckler said the French side would like to have a Working Group report on the pros and cons of a possible Berlin settlement for submission to home governments by the week of March 20-27 so that the foreign offices could have an opportunity to study it before commencement of intensive preparations on April 4. Mr. Hillenbrand said he thought this might be difficult in so short a time, particularly in view of Chancellor Adenauer's visit to this country next week. Mr. Winckler said the French side was most interested in producing at least a draft paper on pros and cons. He suggested that the draft might be based on the U.S. and French papers already mentioned and on the German paper on requirements (II WAG/1.9). It was agreed that a subgroup would attempt to produce a redraft of a paper described by Mr. Winckler. Mr. Hillenbrand said that owing to the Chancellor's visit he would like to suggest that the group postpone its next meeting until March 18 but that arrangements be made in the meanwhile to produce an agreed version of a further interim report to NATO.

Lord Hood asked if the full Quadripartite Group report would not have to be ready by April 12. He said we now have a rather strong commitment to give NATO the full text of this report. Mr. Hillenbrand said a full interim report to NATO would have to be made. It did not automatically follow that NATO should receive the identical text of the report given to the Foreign Ministers, but if the main substance of the report were a discussion of the pros and cons of a change in Berlin status, this might be possible.

Mr. Hillenbrand asked if the April 4 date of commencement of intensive work was acceptable to the other participants. They noted their agreement.

In reply to a question from Lord Hood, Mr. Hillenbrand reviewed the organization of a possible Working Group report to the Foreign Ministers as he had sketched it out at the last meeting: (1) An updated estimate of Soviet intentions incorporating the results of the Khrushchev conversations with General de Gaulle and any other important developments; (2) Treatment of the all-German problem, noting that the Working Group had reviewed the

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Western Peace Plan and possibly making reference to the plebiscite proposal, details of which could be contained in an annex to the report; (3) Examination of the Berlin question proper containing a review of principles and minimum requirements as well as description of the advantages and disadvantages of possible arrangements for Berlin and possibly a separate discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of an interim or time-limited arrangement; (4) Suggested Western tactics at the summit meeting, not in the form of final recommendations, but a general description of the possible line; and (5) A listing of background materials prepared by the Working Group which would be available if needed at the summit.

Lord Hood suggested that the tactics section of the paper again be in the form of alternate proposals to prevent erroneous conclusions or leaks. Mr. Hillenbrand noted that there would be approximately a further month after the Foreign Ministers' meeting to complete work on recommendations for tactics. Lord Hood noted that the Foreign Office felt the Working Group would have to look over the Western Peace Plan in the light of the position taken by the Five-Nation Disarmament Committee. One possibility would be to omit all references to disarmament in the Peace Plan though difficulties might arise from this. The Foreign Office had also said there might be some confusion or loss of impact if the West put forth its Peace Plan and then subsequently a separate plebiscite proposal. The Foreign Office felt these two ideas might be joined together. It was believed that the Soviets would start summit discussion of Germany and Berlin with their proposal for a peace treaty. The West might then reply with a proposal combining the plebiscite idea with the Western Peace Plan, perhaps in the form of suggesting that a plebiscite be held to find out whether the German people in all parts of Germany preferred the Peace Plan or the Soviet peace treaty proposals.

Mr. Hillenbrand asked whether the German paper on the dangers of an interim agreement on the basis of the Geneva proposals of July 28, 1959 (II WJG/1.13) was compatible with an earlier German paper on principles and tactics of a Berlin settlement which had implied that while it was not desirable to begin negotiations with a repetition of the July 28 proposals, Western negotiators could fall back on these proposals as negotiations progressed. The new paper seemed to have a completely negative view with regard to the July 28 proposals. In particular, it was felt that it did not attach adequate importance to a possible clarification of access questions which had been the main Western gain envisaged by the drafters of the position. Mr. Pauls said the German side considered their criticism of specific aspects of the July 28 proposals to be compatible with their tactical suggestion that the West use these proposals as a fall-back position in summit negotiations.

Mr. Winckler said the German paper was most useful. He said it was perfectly logical to attempt to inquire what were the dangers of the July 28 position which might be used as a possible fall-back position in actual

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negotiations. These disadvantages would particularly include the idea of a time limit which might have most adverse effects on the morale of the Berlin population. Mr. Winckler pointed out that according to reports received by the French Embassy, younger people were leaving West Berlin for the Federal Republic in large numbers and the population was getting older. The criticism of the July 28 proposals contained in the paper made it clear that the Western Geneva proposals were in fact the rock-bottom that we could make. As the German paper had noted, the provision for propaganda control in the July 28 proposals would provide the Soviets with an opportunity for interference in West Berlin. Furthermore, the Geneva text contained no prohibition of the possibility of a separate peace treaty even if it went into effect.

Lord Hood said that as he understood it the German side had not altered its position of last year endorsing the Geneva proposals but merely wished to point out the disadvantages involved in those proposals. In other words, it was a choice of evils. The disadvantages in a possible interim agreement must be balanced against the disadvantages of the situation if no agreement on Berlin were reached. Mr. Pauls repeated that the Federal Government did not wish to repudiate the July 28, 1959 position.

Mr. Pauls asked if reports had been received as to judgment of the participating governments on required Western military strength in Berlin. Mr. Hillenbrand and Lord Hood said that reports had not yet been received; an effort would be made to hasten them. Colonel Schofield noted that there had been discussion and agreement on this subject among the Western Commandants in Berlin to the effect that present Western troop strength in Berlin was adequate to fulfill the missions assigned their forces, but that fulfillment of these missions could not be guaranteed if there were to be reductions in the forces.

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